BC STATS
Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations

Infoline

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January 24, 1997

You will find the last 5 issues on our website:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

Report **Team Canada Mission - An Immigration Perspective**

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/96	% change on year ago
BC	3,888.5	2.5
Canada	30,101.6	1.2
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		% change
(BC - at market prices - $ millions)	1995	on year ago
Current Dollars	103,273	4.6
Constant (1986) Dollars	74,107	1.9
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Nov	2,795	-0.7
Merchandise Exports (raw) Nov	1,976	-3.6
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Nov	2,678	4.6
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change
(all items - 1986=100)	Dec '96	on year ago
BC	138.7	0.7
Canada	136.8	2.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change
(seasonally adjusted)	Dec '96	on year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,017	3.7
Employed - BC	1,840	4.2
Unemployed - BC	177	-1.1
		Dec '95
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.8	9.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	9.7	9.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jan 22/97	Jan 24/96
Prime Business Rate	4.75	7.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.20	6.95
- 5 year	7.25	7.95
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jan 22/97	Jan 24/96
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.3378	1.3702
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.7475	0.7298
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Oct '96	on year ago
BC	611.94	1.7
Canada	593.77	3.2

SOURCES:
Population, GDP, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Review

Change Coming to *BC STATS*

By late next week, clients who call us may discover that we have adopted voice-mail. We hope that this will not negatively affect your service experience in dealing with us. Please let us know if you experience difficulty or frustration, and we may be able to better manage the system. Thank-you.

More to Come

BC STATS plans for reduced budget.

BC STATS is attempting to cope with a 33% budget cut by implementing a combination of spending reductions, layoffs, voluntary time off, and greater focus on cost recovery. We are rewriting our business plan now and will announce further service and product changes that will come into effect between now and the new fiscal year in April 1997. Clients will continue to find most of the products and services that they have come to rely on—albeit with a relatively modest charge. We hope you will continue to find us relevant and cost effective.

Released this week by BC STATS

- Immigration Highlights, First Three Quarters, 1996
- Consumer Price Index, December 1996
- Exports (BC Origin), October 1996

Next week

- Business Indicators, January 1997

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Infoline Report:

January 24, 1997

Team Canada's Mission to South Korea, the Philippines & Thailand

Reprinted from the First Three Quarters, 1996 Issue of *Immigration Highlights*. An annual subscription is $30 + GST.

The third "Team Canada" trade mission organized by joint federal-provincial efforts is visiting South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand from January 8 to January 20 in order to promote business relationships between Canada and these three countries. The team is led by the Prime Minister and includes provincial Premiers and territorial leaders, as well as a delegation of more than 400 business people, representatives of educational institutions and municipalities, and young entrepreneurs. The mission focuses on eight important Canadian sectors: agri-food, financial services, education and culture, environment, transportation, energy and natural resources, telecommunications and information technology, and building products and construction.

As pointed out by the special article "*British Columbia Has Biggest Export Stake in Team Canada Mission*" featured in the recently released *Exports (B.C. Origin)* by *BC STATS*, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand have become important trading partners with the province. There is great export potential for British Columbian manufacturers and producers to meet the fast growing demand in these countries. From a cultural and immigration perspective, South Korea and the Philippines are also important sources of immigrants to the province. South Korea and the Philippines have been among the top ten sources of immigrants to B.C. in the last few years. They represented injections of foreign investment, entrepreneurial skills, creation of businesses and employment, as well as demanded labor skills. The number of immigrants to B.C. from Thailand has been relatively small although it has been slowly increasing. In 1995, there were 3,266 immigrants to the province from the Philippines, 1,137 from South Korea and 94 from Thailand.

The demographic effects of immigration from these countries were reflected in the increase in the representation in the B.C. foreign born population between the 1986 and 1991 censuses. In 1986, for every 1,000 foreign born population in the province, approximately six were born in South Korea, 25 in the Philippines and fewer than one in Thailand. These numbers had increased to 10 in South Korea, 33 in the Philippines and more than one person in Thailand in 1991. In addition, B.C. attracted a relatively higher proportion of the Canadian foreign born population from these countries. In 1991, of the foreign born population in Canada from these three countries, B.C. accounted for 22 per cent of those of South Korean origin, 20 per cent of Filipino origin, and 18 per cent of Thai origin. B.C.'s share of total foreign born population in Canada was 17 per cent in 1991.

While immigrants from Thailand were fewer and mainly in the Family Class, immigrants from the Philippines were largely independent skilled workers, and those from South Korea were mainly in skilled worker, Investor and Entrepreneur classes. In 1995, 63 per cent of the Filipino immigrants came under the skilled worker classes, and 35 per cent under the Family Classes. On the other hand, 55 per cent of South Korean immigrants came under business classes, and 40 per cent under the skilled worker classes. In 1995, South Korean represented 9 per cent of all B.C. immigrants landed under business classes. A total of 120 entrepreneur cases and 31 investor cases were visaed in 1995 to South Korean business immigrants destined to the province. The total net worth as reported by them totaled more than $259 million.

Compared to other provinces, B.C. also attracts a higher number of foreign students from South Korea and Thailand. While Ontario has always been the favored province for students from the Philippines, the overall number of foreign students from the Philippines has decreased considerably. As of the first of December 1996, the number of foreign students with a valid status in B.C. was 147 from Thailand, 2,891 from South Korea and 38 from the Philippines. A high percentage of students from these three countries were enrolled in trade schools, secondary

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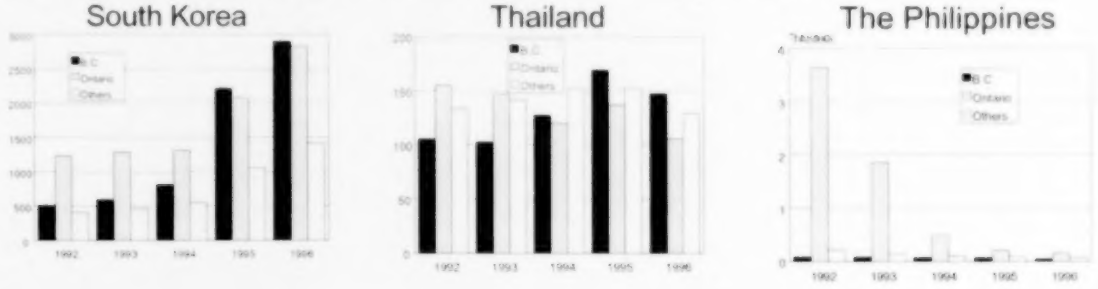
schools, and other non-degree university studies. The length of study varies normally from one to four years.

B.C. Foreign Students as of December 1st of Each Year, By Home Country



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Foreign students choose a country or a province to study based on different reasons. The factors affecting their selection may include ease of obtaining a visa, language, field of study, the degree of similarity in the education system between their home country and the chosen country, reputation of institutions, proximity to home country, fees and charges, etc. From many of these perspectives, B.C. is positioned to attract many students from the Asian Pacific. B.C. can offer not only many reputable schools in different levels/fields of study and a well-developed English as a Second Language (ESL) system, but also a place closer to home, with milder climate and ample scenic beauty, when compared to other provinces.

Economic benefits of immigration include injections of capital under the Investor Immigration Program, creation of domestic businesses under the Entrepreneur Immigration Program, and provision of skilled workers to industries with a shortage of labour supply. Indirect economic benefits of immigration are also generated through trading activities carried out by immigrants who settled in the province and found opportunities to export Canadian or B.C. products to their country of origin. At the same time, as more foreigners conduct trade businesses in the province, more people will be exposed to the life style, education system and other climate/environmental benefits that B.C. can offer. These elements of living are considered to be highly desirable to many people in other countries, and as a result, more potential immigrants or visiting students might be attracted. Historically, trade and immigration promotions interact and re-enforce each other; that is, trade activities could potentially bring more immigrants to the province, and vice versa. Team Canada's visit to Thailand, the Philippines, and South Korea is expected to have positive and long term effects on B.C. immigration and enrollment to the province's education system from those countries.

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highlights

January 24, 1997
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a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Population

- **During the first nine months of 1996, BC attracted 38,690 immigrants, 15.4% more than in the same period of 1995.** BC's share of Canadian immigrant landings was 22.6%, compared to 20.8% in the January-to-September period of 1995. *Source: BC STATS*

- **About half of the immigrants who came to BC between 1991 and 1995 did not speak English.** A high proportion of immigrants who possessed no English ability at the time of landing were of school age. About 40% of those who landed in BC between 1991 and 1995 were between the ages of 5 and 24. During that period, seven of the top ten source countries for BC immigrants were Asian. These countries accounted for 87% of immigrant landings in BC. Cantonese, Mandarin and Punjabi were the top three languages spoken by immigrants with no English ability. *Source: BC STATS*

Prices

- **British Columbia's consumer price index (CPI) increased by less than one percent in 1996.** The CPI rose 0.9% last year. This was the lowest annual increase ever reported in BC's CPI since it was first measured in 1979. The inflation rate was the lowest in the country— about half the national average (1.6%). In the rest of Canada, the lowest annual increase in the CPI was in New Brunswick (1.5%). Among the other provinces, inflation ranged from 1.6% to 2.2%. Alberta and Manitoba (both at 2.2%) had the highest inflation rates in the country last year.

  A 1.8% decline in the cost of shelter was a major factor in BC's record-low inflation rate last year. Prices for clothing and footwear were also down (-0.2%) from 1995. However, food prices rose 0.7%, and larger increases were recorded in the cost of alcohol and tobacco (+1.8%), operating and furnishing a household (+2.0%), recreation, education and reading materials (+2.6%), and transportation (+3.2%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Among major centres, Vancouver had the lowest annual inflation rate in the country, at 0.8%.** Victoria's inflation rate (1.0%) was the second lowest. In other cities, inflation rates ranged from 1.4% in St John's to 2.2% in Edmonton. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Business and Economics

- **The value of shipments of goods manufactured in British Columbia declined 2.5% (seasonally adjusted) in November.** Shipments of durable goods were down 4.2%, with declines occurring in six of the nine durable goods-producing sectors. Wood shipments fell sharply, decreasing to 6.4% below the October level. Shipments of non-metallic mineral products (-8.4%) were also down significantly from the previous month.

  A more modest 0.3% decline in non-durable goods shipments was recorded in November. Paper and allied products (the major non-durable product manufactured in BC) were down 2.7%. However, shipments of food products rose 3.0%, and beverage shipments increased 5.1% in November.

  Despite a 3.0% increase at the national level, shipments were down in six of the country's twelve regions. The largest decline was in the North (-43.7%). Shipments also fell in Manitoba (-5.4%), PEI (-3.9%), Alberta (-2.9%), BC (-2.5%) and Nova Scotia (-0.1%). The relatively strong growth at the national level was due to a resurgence in Ontario's automotive sector, which led to a 5.9% increase in shipments from that province. Newfoundland (+14.3%) recorded the strongest shipment growth in the country. *Source: Statistics Canada*

For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Did you know...?
In 1991, more than 300,000 people in Canada could not speak either English or French—but Canadians speak over 100 of the world's more than 5,000 languages. Chinese is the fastest-growing mother tongue.

- **Year-to-date, shipments by BC manufacturers were down 4.1% from the first eleven months of 1995.** BC and the two territories (-25.1%) were the only regions where shipments in the January-to-November period were down from the previous year. Nationally, shipments rose 2.5%, with the strongest gains recorded in Saskatchewan (+8.8%), Manitoba (+7.5%) and Alberta (+6.5%). Shipments by Ontario manufacturers were 3.1% higher than in 1995, despite the effects of a strike at GM. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Retail sales in the province were up 2.1% (seasonally adjusted) in November.** This was the second consecutive month in which retail sales in BC have shown relatively strong growth. However, sales have been sluggish throughout most of 1996, and year-to-date sales were only 1.4% higher than in 1995. Nationally, retail sales rose 0.9% between October and November. Sales were relatively strong in Saskatchewan (+2.3%) and Ontario (+2.1%). However, weak sales in Quebec (-1.1%) and slower growth in some of the other large provinces such as Alberta (+0.8%) pulled the national average down.

  Year-to-date, retail sales in Canada were up 1.9% over the first eleven months of 1995. Sales rose in ten of the country's twelve regions, with the largest gains recorded in Yukon (+11.8%) and Saskatchewan (+7.3%). Sales were down in Ontario (-0.7%) and Newfoundland (-2.1%). Labour disruptions in the auto sector and the provincial public service, and lower consumer confidence have contributed to the decline in spending. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale sales in BC fell 1.3% (seasonally adjusted) in November. Sales were also down at the national level (-0.7%), and declined in seven of the ten provinces.** Saskatchewan (+1.3%), PEI(+1.2%) and Nova Scotia (+1.1%) were the only regions where wholesale sales increased in November. Year-to-date, sales were up 3.3% in BC, and all provinces except Saskatchewan (-1.7%) recorded gains in the value of goods sold by wholesalers. For all of Canada, wholesale sales were up 3.8% in the first eleven months of 1996. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia mines produced $1.0 billion of coal in 1996, up from $968 million in the previous year.** The province's coal production rose 4.9% to 25.5 million tonnes. In terms of volume, BC accounted for only about a third of total Canadian coal production (76 million tonnes). However, BC coal has a higher-than-average value, and in dollar terms, the province's coal production made up 54% of the Canadian total ($1.9 billion). *Source: Statistics Canada*

Income

- **British Columbians reported almost twice as much investment income on their income tax returns in 1994 ($11.6 billion) as they did in 1993 ($6.5 billion).** Investment income made up 15% of total income in 1994, compared to just 10% in the previous year. Income from all sources rose 11% in 1994, to $75.9 billion. Of this, 61% was from employment, 5% from self-employment, 15% from investments and 10% from pensions. Total after-tax income in 1994 was $63.0 billion. Taxes paid to the federal ($8.4 billion) and provincial ($4.6 billion) governments accounted for 17% of the total income reported by taxfilers in BC. *Source: Revenue Canada*

Tourism

- **Passenger traffic through Victoria International Airport was up 19.3% in 1996.** Last year, 978,625 travellers passed through the airport. This compares to 820,815 people who flew to or from Victoria in 1995. *Source: Victoria Airport Authority*

- **The number of passenger vehicles using the Coquihalla highway declined 6.9% during 1996.** Last year, 2.3 million passenger vehicles used the highway, down from 2.5 million vehicles in 1995. Toll revenues from the highway totalled $36.9 million, 1.8% less than in the previous year. Tolls collected from commercial vehicles rose 8.2%, as the volume of commercial traffic on the highway increased slightly.
  Source: Ministry of Transportation and Highways

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